

K-382

Melfields Farm or Plaindealing  
Near Chestertown  
c. 1857

In 1857, John B. Walmsley purchased 127 acres consisting of parts of Plaindealing, Wyatt's Chance and Wyatt's Addition from Christopher Deering and his wife Julia Ann.<sup>1</sup> In subsequent transactions the farm is simply referred to as Plaindealing.

Walmsley built the house that has survived to this day close to the road leading from Chestertown to Millington. Its basic form was a popular one for the period, a rectangular two-story structure with low-pitched hip roof. However, unlike the majority of others of this period, the plan consisted of a side hall with double parlors and the service rooms were contained in an attached one-and -a-half story wing on the other side of the hall.

Stylistically, Melfields' form and Italianate detail closely resemble the Lusby House located at the corner of High and Mill Streets in Chestertown. In contrast, however, here there was no attempt to emphasize the entry bay. The second story porch did have jib doors which led to a former deck. The present porch appears to date from the turn of the century with its almost Colonial Revival simplicity. The latter feature was probably installed by William F. Melvin who purchased the property in 1899.<sup>2</sup> It remained essentially unchanged until the third generation, present owner, built a small brick wing on the west side in the late 1970's. There appears to have been no attempt to make the design of this wing compatible with its earlier counterpart.

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1. Land Records, Lib. JFG 4, fol. 446.
2. Land Records, Lib. JTD 3, fol. 89.

GOOSE OVEN FARM  
Chestertown, Maryland  
(ca 1870)

Goose Oven is a mid-19th century frame structure which is a three-bay square in plan; it has a shallow hipped roof. Two stories in height, the building has a three-bay wide front porch and a gable-roof side wing which is  $1\frac{1}{2}$  stories high and three bays in length. The main house is two rooms deep with a side hall plan; the wing is also two rooms deep and has a winder stair located in its south west corner. Despite their different forms architectural evidence indicates that the two portions of the building are contemporary.

## INVENTORY FORM FOR STATE HISTORIC SITES SURVEY

**1 NAME**

HISTORIC

AND/OR COMMON

Goose Oven Farm

**2 LOCATION**

STREET &amp; NUMBER

South side Morgnec Road, 1 mile east  
of Morgnec

1st

CITY, TOWN

Chestertown

☒ VICINITY OF

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

Kent

STATE

Maryland

COUNTY

**3 CLASSIFICATION****CATEGORY**☐ DISTRICT☒ BUILDING(S)☐ STRUCTURE☐ SITE☐ OBJECT**OWNERSHIP**☐ PUBLIC☐ PRIVATE☐ BOTH**PUBLIC ACQUISITION**☐ IN PROCESS☐ BEING CONSIDERED**STATUS**☐ OCCUPIED☐ UNOCCUPIED☐ WORK IN PROGRESS**ACCESSIBLE**☐ YES: RESTRICTED☐ YES: UNRESTRICTED☐ NO**PRESENT USE**☐ AGRICULTURE☐ COMMERCIAL☐ EDUCATIONAL☐ ENTERTAINMENT☐ GOVERNMENT☐ INDUSTRIAL☐ MILITARY☐ MUSEUM☐ PARK☒ PRIVATE RESIDENCE☐ RELIGIOUS☐ SCIENTIFIC☐ TRANSPORTATION☐ OTHER:**4 OWNER OF PROPERTY**

NAME

Mr. &amp; Mrs. Charles S. Hague, Jr.

Telephone # 301-778-4710

STREET &amp; NUMBER

RD#1 Box 292

CITY, TOWN

Millington

☒ VICINITY OF

STATE, zip code

Maryland 21651

**5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE.

REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC. Kent County Court House

STREET &amp; NUMBER

Liber #: WHG 48

Folio #: 28

CITY, TOWN

Chestertown, Maryland

STATE

**6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE

DATE

☐ FEDERAL ☐ STATE ☐ COUNTY ☐ LOCALDEPOSITORY FOR  
SURVEY RECORDS

CITY, TOWN

STATE

## 7 DESCRIPTION

K-38.2

### CONDITION

☐ EXCELLENT  
☒ GOOD  
☐ FAIR

☐ DETERIORATED  
☐ RUINS  
☐ UNEXPOSED

### CHECK ONE

☐ UNALTERED  
☒ ALTERED

### CHECK ONE

☐ ORIGINAL SITE  
☐ MOVED      DATE \_\_\_\_\_

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### DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

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Goose Oven is a mid-19th century frame structure which is a three-bay square in plan; it has a shallow hipped roof. Two stories in height, the building has a three-bay wide front porch and a gable-roof side wing which is  $\frac{1}{2}$  stories high and three bays in length. The main house is two rooms deep with a side hall plan; the wing is also two rooms deep and has a winder stair located in its south west corner. Despite their different forms architectural evidence indicates that the two portions of the building are contemporary.

The cornice of the main house roof overhangs the walls about 10" and has a built-in gutter. The profile of this gutter has been obscured by aluminum siding but it probably was a cyma molding. Sawn wooden cornice bracketts, set about 2'o.c., have survived; they are set against a wide frieze also covered with metal siding. The body of the house is completely sheathed in siding and no original detailing can be seen.

Window trim is plain; all six over six windows are new. A floor length window over the main entry door was recently removed. Windows are located on the southern wall opposite those on the northern. A window in the stair hall, however, is set at the stair-landing level. Shutters on the second floor are louvered; those on the first each have three shallow raised panels with Grecian ovolo and bevel applied panel moldings.

There are two chimney stacks in the west wall, each located roughly in the center of the rooms. The chimneys have been rebuilt but are approximately their original size and shape.

The front porch probably replaces the original porch. Its Neo-classical detailing contrasts sharply with the Italianate-influenced bracketts of the main cornice. In addition, houses of this type usually had small, one-bay entrance porches with built-in guttering and bracketts which closely resemble that of the main house roof.\* This

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY      ( \* see page 2.)

## 8 SIGNIFICANCE

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PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES      ca 1870

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

### STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Goose Oven is a significant example of one mid-19th century house form. Its hipped roof and balanced, well-defined facade have their roots in the Greek Revival of the first half of the 19th century but the building also shows the verticality and decorative detail of the architecture of Italianate period. In spite of the alterations made to the house in the 20th century, the structure retains much of its detail. The main entry and stair are outstanding examples of mid-19th century woodworking as is the handsome interior trim.

Another significant element of this building is the outline of its unusual garden.

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

**9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES**

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

**10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA**

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY \_\_\_\_\_

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE

COUNTY

STATE

COUNTY

**11 FORM PREPARED BY**

NAME / TITLE

Marsha L. Fritz, Survey Consultant

ORGANIZATION

Kent County Planning Commission

DATE

778-4600, ext.67

STREET &amp; NUMBER

Court House

TELEPHONE

CITY OR TOWN

Chestertown, Maryland

STATE

The Maryland Historic Sites Inventory was officially created by an Act of the Maryland Legislature, to be found in the Annotated Code of Maryland, Article 41, Section 181 KA, 1974 Supplement.

The Survey and Inventory are being prepared for information and record purposes only and do not constitute any infringement of individual property rights.

RETURN TO: Maryland Historical Trust  
The Shaw House, 21 State Circle  
Annapolis, Maryland 21401  
(301) 267-1438

porch has a hung gutter with plain modillion blocks and a denticulated fascia. The four columns are round with molded capitals and the railing is made up of plain balusters and a narrow handrail.

The main entry has a transom light and sidelights with etched glass panes decorated in a snow-flake pattern. There are double doors with elongated center panels and square panels at the top and bottom. The door panels are similar to the panels of the shutters.

The wing is a true story and a half structure with two gable dormers in roof slopes. Fenestration is irregularly spaced with 6 over 6 sash windows located under the dormers and casement and sash windows in the gable. The roof is finished against a verge board in the gable and a simple box cornice at the eaves. The building has a central chimney and is covered, like the main house, with aluminum siding.

Interior moldings of the main house have a Greek ogee and bevel motif. The baseboards are 11" in width plus the basecap. Window and door trim is 6" wide with a pair of ogee molding and turned corner blocks. Doors have four raised panels with ogee panel molding and handsome painted oak graining. The stair is a dog-leg in configuration; it has a very gentle rise and is situated in a generous stair hall. The newel is walnut with bold turnings and a fluted shaft.

The molded elliptical handrail is also walnut; balusters are turned and rest on an open string. The stair spandrel is plastered.

Mantles on the first floor are white marble with grey veining; they have plain shelves and pilasters, but the lower edge of the frieze is shaped in a double ogee curve. Mantles on the second floor are wooden but have bowed, fluted frieze and pilasters and curved mantle shelves. Both mantle styles are unusual here, the marble mantles especially so. Interior detailing of the wing is very simple; flat trim, 4-panel doors, and plaster walls.

A recent remodeling has resulted in the loss of much of the historic character of this house. In addition to the exterior changes noted, original interior finishes have been painted, the doorway between the rooms on the first floor made much larger, and an incompatible one-story brick kitchen constructed on the west side of the structure. The original kitchen wing, already much altered, was not remodeled and is not in use.

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\* Examples are the restored Greenwood House (K-336) in Chestertown, and the house at 407 N. High Street, Chestertown, where the outline of the original porch can be seen in the paint.

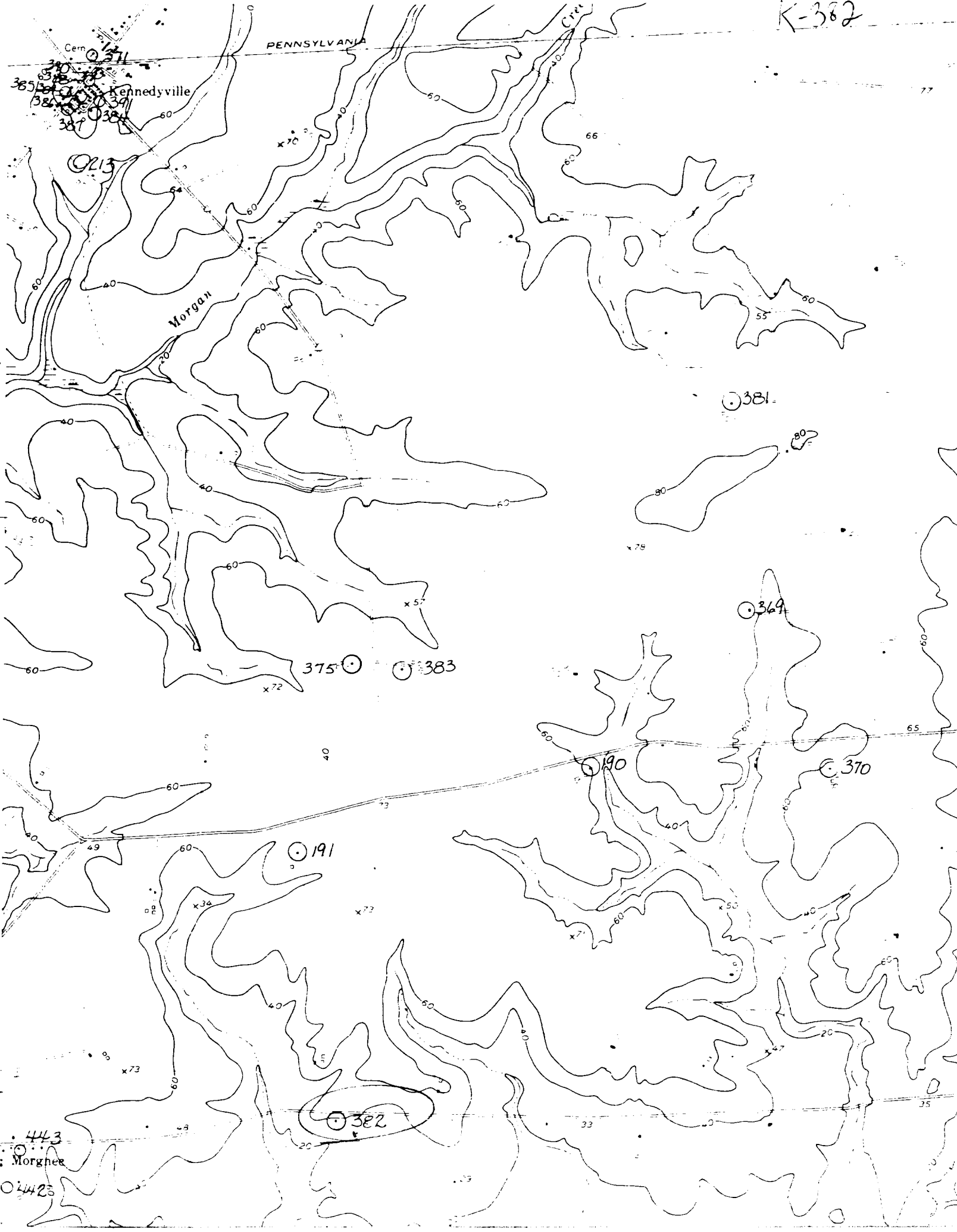


The front yard of the house, was once laid out in a heart-shaped partierre which occupied the present front yard. Elderly local residents can remember the flowering plants which once grew there. The planting is gone, but an outline of the heart--nearly as wide as the main house--is still visible in the lawn. Flanking the heart were two mounded flower beds and beyond them pine-tree borders. The yard was enclosed by a pickett fence. Cinder walks provided access to the garden.

Also on the property are two small outbuildings, one a hen house with pegged frames of sawn heavy timbers. The corner posts measure about 8" square; there are diagonal corner bracing. The siding is thick verticle planking. The board and bolten doors are hung on wrought iron straphinges with penny ends. The roof rafters are nailed.

The corn crib and barn shown was constructed in the late 19th century. The building has a gable roof with nailed rafters and 10" - 12" wide verticle board siding fastened with wire nails.

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Goose oven Farm

View to Southeast

Chestertown

Kent County

M.L. Fritz

3/1980

J. Tyler Campbell  
FREELANCE PHOTOGRAPHY  
CHESTERTOWN, MARYLAND



1320-6

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V

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1996

Plain dealing

C.1857

K-382 Melfields (Goose Oven Farm)